

Prayers at Sea

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(Photo by CPO R.M. Katz, 31st MEU)

Morning Prayers at Sea

[A number of chaplains submitted copies of morning prayers for inclusion in this work. Although the practice of morning prayer aboard naval vessels is not widespread, there is something to be said for beginning the day at sea with prayer.]

Evening Prayers at Sea

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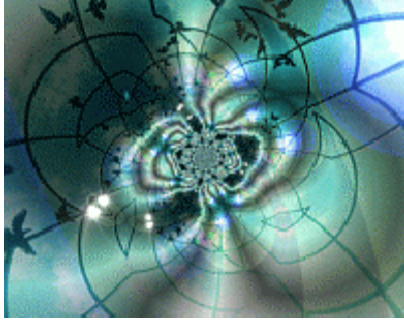
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DEPLOYMENTS

PRAYER WHEN SHIPMATES TRANSFER DURING DEPLOYMENT

Eternal God, as this day draws to a close, let its successes be remembered with gratitude and may none of its disappointments alter or disrupt us too deeply. Assist us as we search for the best in life, so that we may live joyfully. Give us new hope and promise for the days ahead. Teach us patience and thoroughness in the performance of all our tasks. Protect our loved ones from all danger and harm. Help us to rely upon you for all things that are good for us.

Lord, be especially these next few days with our shipmates who will be transferring from our ship. We thank you for the opportunity we have enjoyed serving with them. Give them safe passage home, a warm homecoming with family and friends, and a smooth transition into their next commands. Now Lord, be with those who stand the watches and give rest to those who sleep. Amen.

EVENING PRAYER - END OF LONG LINE PERIOD

Lord, may the end of a long line period be marked by a simple sentiment- gratitude for what we are-safe, and gratitude for those who made it so: our shipmates. Amen.

EVENING PRAYER - DELAYED RETURN

You know us well, O Lord, and therefore we can't hide what we feel. Disappointment clouds over us tonight. Most of us have been here before, and still delay strikes a low bass cord in our ranks. O God, at times we have trouble accepting what we must. We tire of giving, just giving. We've made it thus far. We simply want to bring our time apart to its proper conclusion. In effect, O Lord, our life comes down to yet another confrontation with reality. As always, we need you to lighten our burden. O God, allow us to share our frustration, however felt, without forsaking loyalty or our proven appreciation of the real world we face and daily serve. Just the fact that we're going home is enough. In actuality, O God, our deepest concerns are for our families and friends. They often don't have the support which we have. They've had enough. O Lord, hold them when we can't. Whatever, Lord, one thing we know for sure - *March* will indeed come in like a lion. The roars and cheers of well-deserving sailors and Marines will be heard across the land: "Home at last! Home at last!" Give us peace this night. Amen.

EVENING PRAYER - START OF DEPLOYMENT

Almighty God, our thoughts turn to you as we sail for distant places. You know the future and we are confident that you will defend us from all adversities to body and soul, if we put our trust in you. Watch over spouses, children, and loved ones at home through all the days of our separation, that our return may be a blessed homecoming. Enable each of us to accept cheerfully our place of duty within this ship and, with true devotion, attend to our appointed task as a

service with good purpose. Grant us the ability to maintain a good ship's spirit, the fortune of a happy voyage, and a safe return. Amen.

Almighty and Everlasting God, as we begin our deployment to _____, we are keenly aware of our feelings and emotions. We are excited with a sense of adventure, we are still a little numb from the shock of physical separation from our loved ones; and we are a little apprehensive at what the future holds for us. Minister to us, Lord, according to our need. Give us the strength to do our jobs, give us a spirit of cooperation and harmony, grant to us and our families your protection, your guidance, and your peace. Amen.

Eternal God, it's happened, so smoothly, so beautifully, so well that day, for so many among us, that very first day, at sea. The days of preparation, the weeks and even months of long hours and tedious labor by so many are now somehow well worth it. Some among us will work while others sleep as we make our way across the silent seas. Bless those who stand watch this night as well as those who sleep that both may have a sense of satisfaction and pride at being a vital part of this magnificent ship and its marvelous crew. You have blessed us richly, bless us still by a grateful awareness of your creative power and love. Amen.

Almighty God, we pause now to give Thee our thanks:

- For Thy providence over us during our weeks on the sea.
- For families and friends and homes to return to, the thought of which fills our hearts with warm anticipation.
- For close friendships formed while out . . .
- For returning home a little wiser and more appreciative than we were when we left . . .
- O Thou who has given us so much . . . give us now a grateful heart. Amen.

Eternal God, today we set sail again. As always there was both joy and sadness. Increasingly we say good-bye to shipmates who have been with us through memorable experiences, and we welcome new ones who have come to assume their responsibilities though not to take their places. Human life is such a unique thing. No two of us are the same, yet all of us share the same needs for acceptance and recognition, accomplishment and satisfaction. Our lives are like our days. Each one has something that sets it apart even while it is made up of the same number of seconds, minutes and hours. Keep us open to the appreciation of each person's distinctiveness even as we engage in operations or exercises which require our becoming part of something larger than ourselves. We thank you, O God, that you haven chosen to make us so much alike but with such interesting differences. Amen.

O Lord, it's good to be at sea, to establish a new routine. It is also painful to leave those we love. The tears still linger. As the days and nights unfold cause us to remember, to enjoy our life when we can, and to relax when we must. Keep us from being and becoming faceless people. Add spirit to our muscle and bone. Bless our journey and bring us safely home when our time and task is done. Grant us a good night. Amen.

Now we can say we are truly beginning, 0 Lord. The Marines are on board - our time has come. We are underway. We are complete. Bless us, 0 God. Help us to mold ourselves into a like-minded community, respecting our differences because we respect each other. As we are bearers of the sword, allow us ultimately to bring peace, for we seek to affirm rather than to negate life. These are not empty words, 0 God, for we are taking the point - we approach the front line of history. What we do is very real. Yet, when all is said and done, cause us to understand that while we plan and determine and act - you still remain the Lord of history. Your will be done. Amen.

Almighty God, as we spend our first night at sea on this particular voyage, we pray that you will be with and sustain our families and loved ones whom we have left behind. As the hours of darkness stretch before us, give those who stand watch through the night strength equal to their tasks. When the time for sleep comes, now or later, give each of us a good rest and a refreshed feeling on the morrow, we pray. Amen.

EVENING PRAYER - END OF DEPLOYMENT

Lord, you are with all who go down to the sea in ships. On this last night before homeport we thank you for the constancy of the care you have shown us during the past days at sea. We know you were there in the middle of it all and we thank you for seeing us through complicated and dangerous evolutions. Your strength has become our strength whenever we turned to our appointed tasks. Forgive us our thoughtless pride that led us to assume, at times, that we were working all on our own, or riding a streak of good luck. We have had some bad moments here and there, but you were holding us in your hands and we are truly grateful. As we return from sea to shore and home to families and friends, help us to shift from the sailor character we adopt at sea once again into being whole people with eyes to see, ears to hear, arms to hold -- people once again living to love. We know you would have us be more like you, 0 Lord, so help us on our homeward way and bless us and our loved ones with happy reunion. Amen.

Eternal God, as we watch the nightfall around us, we find ourselves searching for your presence. We are filled with mixed feelings about coming home. Sometimes we feel good about the end of the deployment but other times we feel that we need more time to get ready for our homecoming. But then we think of the new day that You have promised. So tonight we commit to Your care all our concerns for You care for us. Amen.

The Psalmist says of us, "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." Let us praise the Lord for this day, because we come to him with pride in our accomplishments, with thanksgiving that we have been kept safe, and with hopefulness that our future may be one of continued achievement. 0 Lord our God, we thank you for joy this day, and ask you to bless our work in preparing for the future. Encourage us when we need it, comfort us when we hurt, and pour your love on our Nation and on those we love, this day and forever. Amen.

Lord, as we begin to wind-up the cruise, we thank you for your help over the past months. At sometime-or-other all of us were hurting either in mind or body or soul. We are thankful that you didn't CASREP us, but helped us hang in there. Help us Lord, now to finish-up in style. Amen.

Eternal God, we pray tonight with the anticipation and excitement of people who having shared labors and learning, now look forward to the joys and comforts of home. We have learned much about our ship, her capabilities, her idiosyncrasies, her performance in different situations. We have learned even more about one another - our strengths and weaknesses, the points at which we are sensitive or vulnerable, our personal hurts or public pride. We know ourselves a bit better, also. We know too well that none of us are gods. But, we know that each of us has fears and failures. Help us to accept one another without the necessity of making others over into a likeness of ourselves. Let us receive from others such acceptance as will set us free to strive after the best of which we are capable. As others have prayed before us, we too pray, "Protect us all the day long of this trouble-filled life until the day is spent and the evening shadows lengthen and the noise of life is hushed and the fervor of life is over and our work is done." Amen.

Dear Lord, as we end this long deployment, we lift up our prayers of thanksgiving. You have watched over us and our loved ones. You have helped us to make this ship a good home away from home. You have brought into our lives shipmates who have taught us how to suffer misfortunes with moral victories. You have calmed the seas and quieted the winds and during times of perilous storms have protected us with Your Divine Power. As we turn our thoughts homeward and breathe a prayer for our loved ones, we thank you that we have done our duties well and have made our mark with the Fleet. Amen.

LAUNCHING AND COMMISSIONING

BLESSING OF THE FLEET

Eternal Father, maker of the seas and the earth, keeper of our log, may there be no unworthy entries concerning our loyalty and industry. May all our soundings be true. We invoke your blessing upon our maritime community, the Coast Guard, the Navy and especially our fishermen and their families. Father, we come to pay tribute to our fishermen today. May they always return safely to port from their adventures at sea. Bring them through the deep waters of life, not to drown them, but to cleanse them.

May they and their loved ones find the blessing of Your care, protection and good health. As they view the beauties of Your sunset, may they thank God for their eyes to see. As they hear the sound of the wind and the waves--yes, the lonely gulls--may they thank You that You gave them ears to hear. As they embrace the invigorating salt air, may they thank God who gave them taste and smell to appreciate the good things in life.

Give us all a greater harmony within ourselves and a better understanding in our relationships with others. Grant us Your love and peace to share with mankind everywhere . . . In our joys and in our sorrows, in our hopes and in our disappointments, until we cross that bar and meet our Pilot face-to-face.

Grant us, our heavenly Father, the sense of accomplishment as we are anchored in that final haven of rest. We pray, in Your name. Amen.

FOR SHIP AND CREW

Creator God, who founded the seas and equipped them with the very resources that sustain life on this planet. We acknowledge our need to be mindful of humanity's dependence on the seas for food, minerals, communications and climate - we seek your will for our nation in meeting its obligations to maintain the freedom of the seas and ask your blessings on this ship and crew in meeting its commitments to that end Amen.

LAUNCHING/COMMISSIONING PRAYERS

Eternal God, for as long as men have gone to sea in ships, they have felt the awesome urging and mystery which takes them from those they love and to whom they long to return. For as long as men have known that life lived only for oneself is too constrictive, they have taken up arms for lives more precious than their own. This magnificent ship brings together the sailor's dedication to successfully sail the unobstructed seas and the Marine's tenacity in combat on land or in the air. As the (Ship) is commissioned to take her place in our nation's Navy, we pray that those who have contributed to her planning and construction may never have cause for shame, that those whose valor is commemorated in her name may be properly honored by her outstanding service -- that those who sail her may devote themselves to the fullest accomplishment of their every responsibility. May her nation look to her with pride and as a model of excellence in execution of every task. May she be a respected adversary in conflict, an effective deterrent to war, and a welcomed means of compassionate assistance to those whose misfortunes make her the means of survival and hope. We celebrate this glorious day with deep gratitude. May we ever draw our strength and support from you whose perfect love is our peace and whose peace is our power. Amen.

Eternal Father, from whom we come and to whom we ultimately return, we commend this ship, the (Name of Ship) to your care and keeping. Make her name great among those whose judgment is honored, spread her fame throughout the land so that the young may desire her service and the old admire her deeds. Bless those who sail her. Sustain them always in their pursuit of peace through power. Lord bless us and keep us. Lord, may your face shine upon us and be gracious to us. Lord lift up your countenance upon us and give us peace forevermore. Amen.

Almighty God, we commend to your gracious care and keeping all the men and women of our country's Navy ashore and afloat. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils which beset them and grant them a sense of your abiding presence wherever they may be: through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Almighty God, who has given men vision and skill to devise and construct all manner of works, we praise you for the men who have labored with brain and hand to build this ship, and we ask your blessing on all their labors. Amen.

Eternal Father, whose power is unsurpassed and whose desire is to give all nations peace on earth, help us to see with Your eyes the significance of this event today. We ask that we may be humbled and inspired by the willing sacrifice of the one we honor today whose name will ever honor this ship. We commend to You, Lord, the honest labors of the men and women whose hands have given birth to this great vessel. We pray your blessing on them and their families. Father in heaven, we also pray the sailors who will give to this ship-the thousands over the years who will run her engines, who cook her meals, fix her machines, hoist her flags, and guide her ways upon the great waters of this world. Grant to them the endurance to master the rigors of their duties. Grant them consolation in separation from families and home. Grant to them the courage needed for the dangers of war with angry seas and hostile forces.

O God, bless this ship; may she be in Your hands an avenger to all who would disturb peace in the world. Make her a symbol of justice and freedom for all the world to see. And with her great might, may she always deter and never have to destroy. Bless the captain and all who have authority under him, that working together we may be pleasing to you, to whom authority belongs. We ask this in your name. Amen.

May Almighty God save, sanctify, and bless you and this ship; and carry you with favoring winds over the sea and into harbor, according to his good will, and, as your divine and heavenly pilot, bring you at last to the haven of his peace. Amen.

Almighty God, in whom we live and move and have our being, we ask your presence and blessing as we gather to commission this ship for the United States Navy. Give us loyalty and devotion so that we will not lose faith in our glorious heritage of freedom, the gift of so many from the past. Help us to be peace-seekers and peacemakers in all our works. Bless the officers and crew who will serve in her with fidelity in all their tasks. Watch over our families in times of separation. Give us courage and faith to meet the challenges that will be placed before us. Preserve us from the dangers of the sea and the violence of the enemy, for you are the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Amen.

O Almighty God, the sovereign commander of all the world, at whose word even the wind and the sea obey, we turn to you as we gather to launch this ship for the United States Navy. We ask you to bless this occasion. We ask that this ship may always travel in peaceful waters, but if conflict is thrust upon us, may she bring credit to the traditions of our Navy. Bless the officers and crew who will sail her.

May they see the wonders of the deep and always invite your hand to steady her course. May her voyages be made in safety and may we be ready to express our thankfulness for your providence by constant devotion to duty and sincere faith in you. Amen.

Almighty God, we acknowledge your master design in all creation and your authority to direct our every act. How small our accomplishments seem when compared to the majesty and wonder

of your works! Yet we stand with pride before this symbol of what human hands and minds can do, and celebrate the commitment of the men who will breathe life into this structure. We give you thanks for the skills and dedication that will keep this ship afloat and efficient through many miles of trackless oceans. May those who lead in this ship be granted wisdom in the ways of ships and men, and a tireless commitment to fair treatment of those in their charge. May those who serve aboard this ship be given patience and a firm sense of their own value as persons. But Lord, let not our enthusiasm distract us from a prayer for what even this ship cannot provide: peace on earth and good will toward all people. We pray that the people of this planet might receive the divine gift of your peace, and know justice, security and hope. Amen.

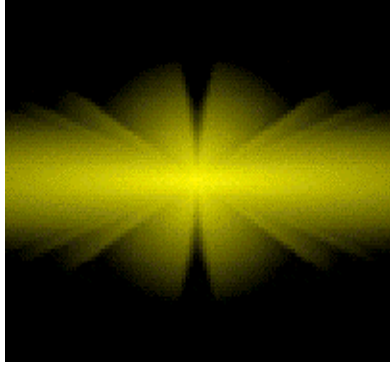
Almighty and everlasting GOD, in whom we live and move and have our being, we humbly pray that you will bless us with your spirit as we gather to commission this vessel of the United States Navy. Endow us with such loyalty and devotion that we will not lose faith with the glorious heritage of freedom which has been handed down to us by the patriots of old. Keep us from finding our security in arms alone, but in the conviction that right makes might. Bless the officers and crew of this ship, giving us fidelity in all our tasks. Create and maintain among us cheerfulness and a good ship's spirit. Grant fair weather in all our voyages, and if dangers confront us in the midst of the sea, may you always be our strong tower of defense. Preserve us from the dangers of the sea and violence of the enemy. Make us strong in the fear of GOD and the love of righteousness that we may gird ourselves in support of the high ideals upon which our nation was founded. This we pray in your name. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, we are gathered this morning to commission and present this ship to the nation for service in its behalf. It represents the collective efforts of thousands of your people, who, pursuing their vocation as stewards of your gifts, gave not only the work of their hands and minds. They await now an accounting of their stewardship as this ship comes alive and is put to the test of prolonged service in the fleet. We invoke your blessing upon them, this ship, and those generations of sea service personnel who will serve in her.

We bless you for the memory of life-long example of our name sake, _____. We pray that this ship, we who will first take her to sea and those who follow, will be equal to the high standard he set. As he was known, may this ship be known for loyalty, vision, integrity, courageous and honorable service.

May you especially bless in this hour he/she who will assume command, Captain _____. We know him/her as a talented and trustworthy leader. Cause us to be loyal and trustworthy followers.

Being mindful of the imperfect world in which we live and the complexities of world leadership, we ask your forgiveness that we have not yet found a more perfect way to peace. Cause us who serve, along with those in the public trust, to engage this ship only in the pursuit of honorable and lasting peace, and the preservation of tranquillity among the nations. Amen.



MORNING PRAYERS AT SEA

Lord, You are Creator of all that is. We come into Your presence this morning with thankful hearts. We give thanks to You for the bounty of Your blessings, for the opportunities of travel, for the sharing between peoples, and for the love of our families and friends. God, we ask Your strength and guidance throughout this day that we may do our best to serve You and each other in all our tasks. Amen.

Father, another day is dawning and we awake refreshed from our night's sleep. Let us begin this day with joyful hearts and work hand-in-hand so that when our tasks are done we may look back and say we did our best together. Lord, thank you for the opportunities which You have given us, and thank You Lord for our lives and the lives of our families whose love is our strong support. Hear our prayer, O Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, as we stand in Your presence we are humbled at the sight of Your mighty works. When we look at the sunrise and the moon set, we see your handiwork. When we look at the vastness of the mighty ocean, we know Your strength and power. And when we look at ourselves, we know Your love. Lord, be with us and our loved ones throughout this day, and may all that we do be in the service and honor of Your holy name. Amen.

O Lord our God, light up the morning with Your mercy that we may rejoice and be glad all the day. Father, be our safe harbor from the raging storms and from the demands of our daily lives. Father, be our protected anchorage from the winds of strife and deliver us from the becalmed state of selfish thoughts and moods. Go forth, Lord, and lead the way. Let us be still and know that You are God, and that we can find fulfillment in You. Amen.

Father, as we begin this new day which You have made, grant us the assurance of Your presence that we may face today unafraid and with the courage which You alone can give. Lord, we seek Your holy inspiration. As You inspired the prophets of old, inspire us to stand against what we know is wrong. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of this day. Amen.

Father, take our lives and make them as You would have them be. By the discipline of duty, teach us self-control. By the lessons of frustrated love, guide us to a holier relation with others. By the insight of loss and sorrow, open to us the doors of understanding. By the gall of pin-pricked pride, drive us to a true and humble estimate of ourselves. In the spotlight of reason, drive us to think more clearly, that we may find each morn a dawn for service and a day's time for soul-growth. Thus Father, draw us near to You. Amen.

Lord God, we come into Your presence this morning beseeching Your guidance and support. Be with us Father, in all that we do today, instruct us and support us in making decisions so that whatever we do we may do to the glory of Your holy and divine name. Father, be with

our families, protect and support them and all our loved ones throughout this day, in Your holy name we pray. Amen.

Lord God, You alone are the creator and sustainer of this glorious universe. We thank You, Lord, for the beginning of this new day, in which we can do our best to serve You and to help one another. Father, grant us the ability this day to see those small things which need our attention, to take the initiative to greet each other with a warm and sincere smile, and to show our love and concern for everyone in all that we do. In Your holy name, we pray. Amen.

Most holy and gracious God, who turns the shadow of night into morning, satisfy us early with your mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all the day. Let the light of Your countenance calm every troubled thought, and guide our feet into the way of peace. Perfect Your strength in our weakness and help us to worship You in all that we do. Amen.

Almighty God, as we begin this day we thank You for the opportunity of making new friends and seeing new places. Father, grant that we all may come to appreciate the true beauty and meaning that friendship can bring into our lives. Grant also the ability to grow in understanding of other people's lives, that we may become the vehicles of understanding to others. Father, as we end this visit, turn our minds and our hands to the tasks before us that we may accomplish them to the best of our ability and to the glory of Your holy and divine name. Amen.

Father, as we face this new day, grant us wisdom, strength and love to serve You in all that we do. We acknowledge You, Lord, as the creator and ruler of all that is. When we look at the sunrise, we see the beauty of Your handiwork; when we look at the force of the sea, we are aware of Your power and might, - and when we encounter one another in love, we know Your love. Thank You God, for our lives and for the world in which we live, in Your holy name we pray. Amen.

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Eternal Father, we come to You in prayer at the dawn of this glorious day. We come to You when we are in need and when we are sorrowful Father, we seek Your forgiveness for not coming to You with our joys and successes as readily as we come to You with our sorrows and failures. Almighty God, we beseech Your divine and holy presence, with our families and loved ones, assure them of our continued love and concern for them. Amen.

Lord, many of us come this morning to this place with this gale-beaten ships, arriving at last at into a calm and sheltered cove.

- Our ropes are frayed from incessant tension . . .
- Our sails are battered by sudden gusts or unexpected hardships . . .
- Our spars are broken where we were unable to withstand the force of temptations . . .
- Our decks are soaked, having been awash with the tears of worry and doubt.
- Refit us this morning as we draw close to you in this quiet moment.
- Restore us with renewed courage that we each may set sail again, as stout ships able to head high into the wind and hold our own course.

We thank you that we can set our hearts like sextants upon you and navigate even perilous, uncharted seas with confidence because you are our North Star: absolute, constant and dependable. Amen.

Lord, may what we begin today in effort and cooperation be done with your inspiration. May we continue with your help and be completed with your guidance. Lord, guide us in our efforts help us to persevere with faith, courage, and sincerity. Amen.

Proverbs 13:4 "No matter how much a lazy man may want something, he will never get it. A hard worker will get everything he wants." O Lord, in whose hands are the sands of time, we awake to the fresh demands of a new day. May we not be empty-handed at the close of day but have our nets filled with cheerful faces, grateful memories, and a knowledge of things well done in your sight. Amen.

Proverbs 13:18 "A man who will not learn will be poor and disgraced. One who listens to correction is respected." Dear Father, as life moves on and we move on with it, may we have wisdom to accept advice. Let us not stumble over the mistakes of yesterday, nor rest on the

laurels of past good works, but strive to perform our duty better. Make us strong in self-control, and may our words and thoughts be acceptable to you. Amen.

Psalms 4:1 "Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness; You have enlarged me in my distress." We begin this week realizing that there are many unknowns coming our way. There will be thrills, joy, happiness mixed with sadness, sorrow, and mistakes. Dear Father, grant us to receive whatever lot comes our way. We know that when you are for us nothing can destroy us. We begin this week with the confidence of your presence in our midst. Amen.

Habakkuk 3:17-18 "Though the fig tree does not bloom . . . the olive fails . . . the fields yield no meat, the flock be cut off and no herd in the stalls. I will rejoice in the Lord . . . "Increase our faith dear Father, save us from weak, simpering instability. May we grow in maturity, in our relationship with you, ourselves, and our neighbor. Amen.

Romans 12:21 "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good ." Dear Father, often it is difficult to return good for evil, right for wrong, love for hatred, kindness for meanness. However, we know that true love works no ill. May we demonstrate today your love in all our actions and attitudes. Amen.

Genesis 1:31 "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." Thank you Father for the creations of your hand. May we comprehend that it is all very good May we use your creation to your honor, our fulfillment, and to bless our fellow people. Amen.

Matthew 7:7 "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Dear Father, teach us to set worthy goals, help us to keep them in focus, strengthen us not to be turned aside by meaningless and mundane chores. Fill us with patience, persistence, and performance. Amen.

Mark 4:24 "The measure you give shall be measured again unto you." Dear Father, we thank you for the full measure this day offers. Let us give in greater measure than we receive. When this day closes may we have the contented satisfaction of a job well done, a life well lived, and a faithfully demonstrated work. Amen.

Matthew 23:11 "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant." Dear Father, teach us the value of serving our fellow people. May we be more interested in giving than receiving, in performing than talking, doing for others than in having them do for us, thus, we share who we really are and become our greatest. Amen.

Psalms 116:12 "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?" Dear Father, such as we have, and all that we are we offer to you today. Assist us to mold the events of our life so that we remain pliable, growing, and alive. Amen.

I Corinthians 3:7 "God gives the increase." Dear Lord, help us grow towards our maximum capacity. Where there is discouragement give us hope, where there is doubt give us trust, where

there is weakness give us strength, where there is hostility give us friendship, where there is laziness give us industry, where there is hate give us love. And so we will be at unity with you, ourselves, and humankind. Amen.

Psalm 116:14 "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people." Dear Father, we thank you for the adventure of life which this new week offers. Let our attitudes and activities reflect the vows we have made and the faith we hold. Bless all those who work together today. Amen.

James 1:14 "A person is tempted when he is drawn away and trapped by his own evil desires." Dear Father, may we never weave a web lest we are entangled in it; dig a pit lest we fall into it; nor set a trap lest we be caught in it. Give us the courage to live honestly, openly, and righteously before you and our shipmates. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 12:1 "Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not..." Dear Father, grant us the wisdom to commit the strength of our youth to your righteousness, lest our latter days come upon us and we have no pleasure in them. Amen.

James 3:13 "Is there a wise and understanding man among you? He should prove it by his good life, the deeds he performs with humility and wisdom." Dear Father, we realize that our actions speak so loudly that our words can seldom be heard. Help us to live each day to demonstrate the faith and the love that is within us, that we may experience true contentment and fulfillment. Amen.

Song of Solomon 1:6 "They made me keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyards have I not kept." Dear Father, often we are lost in our own importance ignoring the needs of those for whom we should care. Forgive us for our gross selfishness. Help us to become caring, concerned shipmates, children, husbands, fathers, and friends. Amen.

Psalm 10:72 "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." Dear Father, we express our gratitude for your retrieving us often from the pitfalls of life. May we never be ashamed to give answer and evidence of the faith we profess, the promises we claim, and the hope we possess. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 11:7 "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." Good morning Lord, how sweet it is! For some sunrise brings an end to a night of hard work, for others the beginning of the day's labor. In both cases, Father, we rejoice, knowing you are with us. Fill our days with satisfaction, accomplishment, and the knowledge of a job well done. Amen.

James 4:17 "He that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Dear Father, we thank you for the spark that you have put in all of us. So often we speak without thinking, act without consideration, and do evil rather than good -forgive us. May your image come forth from the words of our mouth and the deeds of our life. Amen.

I Corinthians 14:8 "If the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle?" Dear Father, thank you for this day of opportunity and service. May we always be positive in our leadership, clear in our instructions, and detailed in our demonstration, using all our resources to the fullest. Amen.

Matthew 6:33 "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." Dear Father, as we order our priorities today, grant us grace to seek you with our whole hearts. In so doing may our words and actions reflect your character through our conversation and our work. Amen.

Proverbs 5:1 "Pay attention, and listen to wisdom and insight." Dear Father, we thank you for that great and wonderful computer, our brain. Give us the will to use it more effectively and to fill it with the good, the positive, and the worthy. May we be alert as we guide our body through this day to a more effective and abundant life. Amen.

Dear Father, we realize that this is the first day of the rest of our life. As we endeavor to grasp each opportunity and awake the potential within us, may we never give up nor be content with less than our best performance. Amen.

Proverbs 3:5 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Never rely on what you think you know. Remember the Lord in everything you do and He will show you the right way." With gratitude we begin this day, dear Father. Help us have worthy interests and goals lest life become a dull chore filled with boredom. Let us need no device to aid us, except our trust in you. As the mighty tide of your boundless love moves into our lives, we will find victory and meaning in living. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 10:18 "When a man is too lazy to repair his roof, it will leak, and the house will fall in." Dear Father, may we care enough for ourselves to repair the leaks in our moral character, lest we decay from within. Grant us the motivation, the observation, and the articulation that is commensurate with our position of leadership. Amen.

Proverbs 27:4 "Anger is cruel and destructive, but it is nothing compared to jealousy." Dear Father, as we write today's page in our life, keep us from narrow, arrogant complacency. Open our lives to you and our neighbor. Help us to be understanding, kind, and cheerful, never giving place to anger or jealousy. Let us face today with increased faith in you and with undaunted courage. Amen.

Psalms 103:1,2 "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." Dear Father, we thank you for this great day that you have made. Make us adequate to receive the blessing it holds. Develop our character, strengthen our courage, and intensify our dedication as we live each moment. Amen.

Micah 6:8 "He has shown you, O man, what is good,- and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God" Dear Father, give us judgment to live as we know we should, and not as we want. May we have the backbone to practice those

of your principles that we know. We desire that faith, justice, love, and mercy tempered with firmness be incorporated into our daily lives giving us purpose and direction. Amen.

Joshua 24:14 "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth." Dear Father, we stand in awe at the magnificence and might of your power. Teach us to serve you in sincerity and in truth, never taking lightly your relationship to us. Amen.

Psalms 9:13 "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, consider my trouble which I suffer . . ." Dear Father, we are thankful that you do have mercy and consideration upon us in our trouble. Often we make our own trouble,- deliver us from such blunders today. Help us to show the same mercy and consideration that we desire to receive. Amen.

Colossians 1:10 ". . . Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." Dear Father, we examine our purpose, plans, and performance as we begin this new day. May we be worthy of the space we occupy and the faith we hold. Help us to fill each hour with good work and with increased knowledge of you. Amen.

Matthew 5:16 "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven." Dear Father, may all our actions identify us as your children. Make your qualities of love, peace, consideration, and dependability be foremost in our character. We pray that the action of our lives will fortify the faith we claim. Bless those returning from the long weekend today. Amen.

Job 16:4 "I also could speak as you do: If I were in your place, and you in mine; I could heap up words against you and shake my head at you." Dear Father, teach us compassion, lest we judge our shipmate harshly. Grant us wisdom to give good advice and leadership. Help us to be fair and firm in the direction of our own life. Amen.

Mark 4:35 ". . . let us pass over to the other side." Dear Father, save us from the cesspool of stagnation and complacency. May we be alert to our need when we are tired for rest, when we are irritated, for calming, when we are in a rut for new direction, when we are troubled and hurt for healing, and when our faith falters for renewal. Help us to be whole and well persons. Amen.

Luke 11:4 "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." Dear Father, let us never dehumanize ourselves so that we become unforgiving in our personal and interpersonal relationships. Help us always to be forgiving so that we may be forgiven. Amen.

Psalms 27:1 "The Lord is my light and salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" Dear Father, we thank you for the dawn and promise of a new day. Give us courage and strength with the light of wisdom that we may know fullness of

life. Thank you for keeping those who stood watch by night. Now guide those who watch by day. Amen.

Matthew 5:7 "Blessed are the merciful.- for they shall obtain mercy." Dear Father, teach us to be merciful, to give the benefit of a doubt, to be concerned. Help us have the quality of self-esteem that will allow us to extend a helpful hand without fear. May the walls that have separated us from fellowship and communication be broken down. Forgive us when we have hidden ourselves from those who need us. Amen.

I Chronicles 16:29 "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name . . . worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." Dear Father, may this first day of the rest of our life be filled with adventure and accomplishment for you, ourselves, and our fellow shipmates. Amen.

Matthew 16:26 "What has a man profited, if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" Dear Father, teach us so to order our priorities that we put first things first. May our faith be in Him who made all things, not in the things themselves; in the eternal and not the temporary; in the building up and not in the tearing down. Grant us the wisdom and courage to conquer inner space that the quality of our life may grow. Amen.

Because the world has never been a "safe" place and never will be we ask not for the easy job and a soft, comfortable life. Instead, we ask for the strength and the courage to face bravely anything and everything that life with its surprises may yet throw our way that we may come through these encounters unashamed and with heads held high. Be with us all. Amen.

Good Morning, Lord! We take time out now to thank you for the crisp beauty of this young day. We ask you to help keep us from being bored with the jobs we have to do and with the lives we end up living. Instead, fill us with a sense of challenge that we may be able to face each day with enthusiasm and anticipation of what it may bring into our lives. Be with us all Amen.

Forgive me those things in my life, O Lord, for which I am today ashamed and help me live today in such a way that the list of these things may not be as long tonight as it must have been last night. Be with us all. Amen.

O Lord God, you alone know what lies ahead for me in this new day . . . grant that in every hour of it I may remain true to my beliefs in you. Give me the courage to live in this day in accordance with the best that lies within me . . . keep me today from doing anything you would not want me to do or think or say. Be with us all. Amen.

Some of us are hurting, Lord, deep down inside where we don't allow anyone else to ever really see . . . others of us are anxious, Lord, worried about what may happen next in our lives . . . and all of us, whether we admit it or not, need you in our lives. So, come into our hearts, Lord . . . soothe our hurts, calm our fears, provide for our needs, and hear our prayers. Be with us all. Amen.

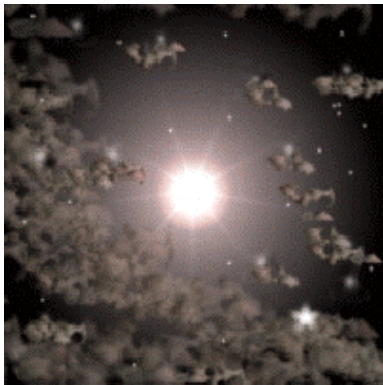
Help me to realize, O Lord, that there has to be a reason and a purpose for me to be where I am and doing what I'm doing . . . make that reason and that purpose clear to me, Lord, and be with us all. Amen.

Give me the courage this day, Lord, to do those things I know I should be doing . . . give me the strength to keep from doing those things I know I should not be doing . . . give me the ability to properly tell which is which. Be with us all. Amen.

We acknowledge thee this morning, O Lord, as the source of everything good and clean and decent in our lives. May we this day live our faith in thee the same way we wear our uniforms unashamed of what either represents so that the things that we do and the things that we say today may reflect only good, of ourselves . . . of our country and of thee, Our God. Be with us all. Amen.

O Lord God, I want to thank you for the beauty of yesterday and the challenge of today. I think I know what's right and what's wrong in my life, God . . . but I get mixed-up sometimes and I need your help. So be with me today help me do what's right help me keep from doing what's wrong and help me know which is which. Be with us all. Amen.

Bless, guide, and comfort those we love, Lord, wherever they may be . . . give them the ability to handle wisely whatever problems they may be facing during our absence . . . and perhaps because of our absence . . . and bring us all safety together again. Be with us all. Amen.



EVENING PRAYERS AT SEA

EVENING PRAYER DURING OPPE PREPARATIONS

"Eternal God, your Holy Word beckons us, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Loving God, there are many in our ship with heavy burdens. Some are especially burdened with preparations and cares concerning our upcoming OPPE. Give to all members of our ship involved with OPPE confidence in their professionalism and allow each shipmate to perform to the very best of his/her ability. Also be with other shipmates who may be burdened with troubled relationships back home. Be with still others who are burdened with illness, financial troubles, or whatever. Tonight God, may all who are burdened claim your promise and draw nigh unto you, and then God, may you honor your promise and give them rest this night. Amen.

A PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING DURING SHIP'S WATER SHORTAGE

Lord, if we are honest with ourselves, we would have to admit that we come to you in prayer most often when there are crises in our lives. We commonly fail to thank you for the simple provisions in life that you provide us with on a daily basis. Things like the clothes we have on our backs, the food we have in our bellies, the roof we have over our heads, and even simple things like hot water for showers routinely go unappreciated by us. God, during our upcoming water shortage period, may we not complain or become bitter, but rather use this experience to build a greater appreciation for your simple provisions in life. Amen.

AN EVENING PRAYER DURING "FLEET-EX"

Lord, tonight we sail into hostile waters and possibly into harm's way. Hostile ships and aircraft are known to be operating in our vicinity. Tonight, we beseech you to spread your blanket of protection over our ship and over our lives.

Of course Lord, we speak tonight only of a simulated combat scenario. But I wonder what changes we would make in our relationship with you were our simulated circumstances real? Lord, just as we prepare during peacetime for the eventuality of war, let us also prepare our lives each day for our eventual reunion with you. Amen.

Lord, during this Fleet-Ex we train for the eventuality of warfare against hostile aircraft, surface ships, submarines and land forces. Lord help us to be diligent in this endeavor.

But God, may we also be ever mindful that we are daily engaged in a vital warfare of a different nature. This is a warfare waged for the moral welfare and stability of our nation.

- Daily we must war against rampant crimes of murder, sedition, vice, abuse, and debauchery.
- Daily we must be uncompromising on our attacks against those evil forces who would rob the hearts, minds, and souls of our friends and loved ones through drug addiction.
- Daily we must battle against oppressive attitudes of prejudice and inequality.

Through exercises such as Fleet-Ex, we have proven our ability and worthiness to defend freedom around the globe. Now God, may we also, through our personal lives, prove to be equally skillful and worthy in the battle for the moral welfare of our nation. Be now with those who stand tonight's watches and give rest to those who sleep. Amen.

A PRAYER ON THE OCCASION OF "SHELLBACK INITIATION"

Lord, today held a great challenge for many of our shipmates (myself included). Shellback initiation taxed us to the very limits of our physical and emotional being. But Lord, how good it felt to meet the challenge and succeed.

Lord, may we pursue other challenges in life with the same degree of zeal, vigor and enthusiasm as we did Shellback initiation.

- When our work-load on the ship overwhelms us, may we rise to meet the challenge.
- When we face diverse testing and temptations on liberty, may we rise up, do right, and meet the challenge.
- When we face re-adjustment in our personal and family lives upon Homecoming, may we rise up, meet the challenge and experience the same exhilaration of success as we did at the conclusion of Shellback initiation.

Finally Lord, may we rise to meet life's greatest challenge. At the end of our days, when we stand in your presence, may we have lived our lives in such a way that we hear your words of welcome, "Well done my good and faithful servant." O God, give us the strength to meet all of life's challenges. For this we will praise your name. Amen.



Prayers in Port

EVENING PRAYERS IN PORT

O God, help us expect to receive something from you now in this moment of pause. Help us to open up to every possibility of what you have in store for us. You have promised us that if we ask, believing, we will receive. Okay, Lord, we are open to you and we ask these things:

- Don't let us face tomorrow with attitudes permit us to do less than our best today or yesterday.
- Give us new spirits: We need them, Lord.
- Take away our repressions and depressions and give us a song to sing tomorrow. Keep us and those we love in your watchful care.
- Give us the gift of quiet rest for both body and soul. Amen.

The busy daytime activity of this ship draws to a close, O Lord God, and the relaxation and rest of night draws around us. Quiet the strivings of our hearts and bring peace to our souls. Create in us an appreciation for the things of the spirit and a tenderness in dealing with the precious values of life. May we not make sport of your power, nor discredit the workings of your spirit in this world. Amen.

Eternal Father, sometimes the jobs on this ship assigned to me seem so small and insignificant that they hardly seem worth doing. But will you help me to do those minor jobs faithfully and in doing them may I find that the responsibilities given me later will become broader and more challenging. Help me to know that the first experiences are necessary in order to do a good job at bigger tasks. May each of us always do our best with the abilities you, O God, have given to us. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ENTERING PORT

Lord, we thank you for our safe return to port. The shelter of this harbor reminds us of the haven of rest we have in you. We are pleased we have given a good account of ourselves in these trials. It really feels good to do well Lord. And to hear the Bravo-Zulu: Well done! Grant we may always please you as well, that in that day you will say to us: Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Amen.

FIRST EVENING PRAYER AT SEA

Did you hear it Lord? Did you catch the crescendo of excitement that burst upon us when all the planning, and building and training came to fruition in the announcement, "Underway!" Underway! The completion of the builder's dream. The final exam for the designer and all the craftsmen. The "at last" moment for those whose life is the way of the sea and who do their work plying ships upon great waters. We are intruders out here, Lord. But we feel secure because we have learned what the seas require of us; and we have built this ship to conform to this alien place. It bespeaks our respect for the power of the sea, and you who command the wind, the waves and the tides on which we move. Grant we never take you for granted, or the laws by which we survive in this place. Grant a sense of satisfaction to all who have worked so hard in these successful trials. Help all of our guests to feel welcome. Bless those who received messages of sorrow and sickness today. Lift them out of their grief; heal those who are ill. Be present with those who watch for all of us during the long night. Care for those whom we love. And one more thing, Lord, let there be peace in our time. Amen.